AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A document retrieval apparatus, comprising:

a query character string input unit that accepts an input of a query character string including a plurality of retrieval keywords;

a document select unit that selects one or more documents that match the query character string from a document database;

a retrieval result output unit that presents retrieval results of the selected documents to a user; and

a document output unit that presents the contents of one of the selected documents designated by the user;

wherein the document output unit determines a manner in which the retrieval keywords are highlighted in the presented one of the selected documents in accordance with a feature index indicating an extent to which each of the retrieval keywords has contributed to the selection of the documents, and highlights the retrieval keywords in the presented one of the selected documents in the determined manner.

2. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the feature index corresponding to one of the retrieval keywords indicates the number of the selected documents including one of the retrieval keywords.

3. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a feature index/color table in which a corresponding relation of the feature index to a color is registered;

wherein the document output unit determines the color corresponding to the feature index of each retrieval keyword with reference to the feature index/color table, and displays the retrieval keyword using the determined color in a different manner from a manner in which other words are displayed.

4. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a feature index/gray scale table in which a corresponding relation of the feature index to a gray scale of a color is registered;

wherein the document output unit determines the gray scale of the color corresponding to each feature index of the retrieval keyword with reference to the feature index/gray scale table, and displays the retrieval keyword using the determined gray scale of the color in a different manner from a manner in which other words are displayed.

5. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a feature index/type face table in which a corresponding relation of the feature index to a type face is registered;

wherein the document output unit determines the type face corresponding to the feature index of each retrieval keyword with reference to the feature index/type face table, and displays the retrieval keyword using the determined type face in a different manner from a manner in which other words are displayed.

6. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the type face includes at least one of font, size, and style of a character.

7. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a ranking unit that ranks the retrieval keywords included in the selected documents in accordance with a feature index indicating an extent to which each retrieval keyword has contributed to the selection of the selected documents;

wherein the document output unit, when highlighting the retrieval keywords in the determined manner, displays the result of the ranking with the contents of one of the selected documents.

8. (Previously presented) A document retrieval apparatus, comprising:

a query character string input unit that accepts an input of a query character string including a plurality of retrieval keywords;

a document select unit that selects one or more documents that match the query character string from a document database;

a retrieval result output unit that presents retrieval results of the selected documents to a user; and

a document output unit that presents the contents of one of the selected documents designated by the user;

wherein the query character string input unit allows a user to designate a word other than the retrieval keywords, the word can be highlighted by the document output unit in the presented one of the selected documents.

9. (Original) The document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein the query character string input unit accepts a designation of a retrieval keyword that is not to be highlighted in the designated one of the selected documents.

10-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) A method of retrieving documents, comprising the steps of:

accepting an input of a query character string including a plurality of retrieval keywords;

selecting one or more documents that match the query character string from a document database;

presenting retrieval results of the selected documents to a user; and

presenting the contents of one of the selected documents designated by the user;

wherein a manner in which the retrieval keywords are highlighted in the presented one of the selected documents is determined in accordance with a feature index indicating an extent to which each of the retrieval keywords has contributed to the selection of the documents, and the retrieval keywords are highlighted in the determined manner.

14. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the feature index corresponding to a retrieval keyword indicates a number of the selected documents including the retrieval keyword.

15. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein a color corresponding to the feature index of each retrieval keyword is determined with reference to a feature index/color table in which a corresponding relation of the feature index to the color is registered, and the retrieval keyword is displayed using the determined color in a different manner from a manner in which other words are displayed.

16. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the document output unit determines a gray scale of a color corresponding to the feature index of each retrieval keyword with reference to a feature index/gray scale table in which a corresponding relation of the feature index to the gray scale of the color is registered, and the retrieval keyword is displayed using the determined gray scale of the color in a different manner from a manner in which other words are displayed.

17. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein a type face corresponding to the feature index of each retrieval keyword is determined with reference to a feature index/type face table in which a corresponding relation of the feature index to the type face is registered, and the retrieval keyword is displayed using the determined type face in a different manner from a manner in which other words are displayed.

18. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the type face includes at least one of font, size, and style of a character.

19. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 13, further comprising the step of: ranking the retrieval keywords included in the selected documents in accordance with a feature index indicating an extent to which each retrieval keyword has contributed to the selection of the selected documents.

20. (Previously presented) A method of retrieving documents, comprising the steps of:

accepting an input of a query character string including a plurality of retrieval keywords;

selecting one or more documents that match the query character string from a document database;

presenting retrieval results of the selected documents to a user; and

presenting the contents of one of the selected documents designated by the user;

wherein in the step of accepting an input of the query character string, a word other than the retrieval keywords is designated by a user, and the designated word is highlighted in the presented one of the selected documents.

21. (Original) The method as claimed in claim 20, wherein a retrieval keyword that is not to be highlighted in the designated one of the selected documents can be designated.

22-24. (Canceled)

25. (Original) A computer program that causes a computer to operate as the document retrieval apparatus as claimed in claim 1.

26. (Original) A computer readable recording medium storing the computer program as claimed in claim 25.